Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 177178

62
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INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 PM-07

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09/05/73 EXT. 21200
APPROVED BY D-MR. RUSH
EA - MR. SNEIDER
EA/RA - MR. CHAPMAN
EA/VN - MR. WENZEL
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EA - MR. STEARNS
S/S - MR. BARNES
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O 061951Z SEP 73
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 177178

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OCON, SEATO
SUBJECT: SEATO: GVN INVITATION TO ATTEND SEATO COUNCIL
MEETING

FROM ACTING SECRETARY FOR AMBASSADOR GREEN AND CHARGE WOOD

REF: CANBERRA 4895

1. IN VIEW DIFFICULTIES RAISED BY PM WHITLAM AND PM KIRK
(NZ EMBOFF MADE REPRESENTATIONS ON INSTRUCTION TO DEPT.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 177178

SEPT. 4) CONCERNING EXTENSION OF USUAL INVITATION TO GVN

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

TO ATTEND SEATO COUNCIL MEETING, I HAVE DECIDED TO WITH-
HOLD INVITATION PENDING THE TESTING OF A COMPROMISE
SOLUTION ALONG LINES SUGGESTED BY AMBASSADOR GREEN. VIEWS
OF AMBASSADOR MARTIN HAVE BEEN FULLY EXPLORED AND WE
RECOGNIZE MERITS OF HIS CASE FOR INVITATION. AT SAME TIME
WE HAVE CONCLUDED IN VIEW AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND
OPPOSITION, FORMAL INVITATION TO GVN WOULD RAISE DIVISIVE
ISSUE AT SEATO MEETING AFTER A GREAT DEAL OF PROGRESS HAS
BEEN MADE IN WORKING OUT CONSENSUS FOR SEATO'S FUTURE
ROLE AND STRUCTURE. FROM U.S. STANDPOINT IT ABUNDANTLY
CLEAR THAT UNIFIED SEATO IMPORTANT IN TERMS OF OUR
COMMITMENT TO THAILAND AND HENCE OUR ABILITY TO EFFECTIVELY
SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF PEACE AGREEMENTS IN INDOCHINA.

2. PLEASE INFORM PRIME MIN. WHITLAM AND PRIME MIN. KIRK
THAT WE REGRET ANY MISUNDERSTANDING THAT MAY HAVE ARISEN
EARLIER CONCERNING GVN PARTICIPATION IN THIS YEAR'S SEATO
COUNCIL MEETING AS AN OBSERVER, BUT IN FACT NO FINAL
DECISION WAS MADE PREVIOUSLY WITHIN USG CONCERNING INVITA-
TION PENDING OUTCOME OF EVENTS IN INDO-CHINA DURING
SUMMER. DECISION TO GO FORWARD WITH INVITATION (REFTEL B)
MADE ON BASIS OF REVIEW THESE EVENTS WHICH OUR JUDGMENT
REQUIRED INVITATION BE EXTENDED. WE BELIEVE THAT GIVEN
USG RESPONSIBILITIES IN INDO-CHINA AND NEED FOR USG TO
SHOW PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR GVN AT THIS TIME, WE AS
HOST COUNTRY FOR SEATO MEETING ARE IN DIFFICULT POSITION
TO TAKE INITIATIVE TO BREAK TRADITION OF INVITING GVN
AS OBSERVER. OUR NOT INVITING GVN MIGHT BE TAKEN AS
WRONG SIGNAL OF OUR INTENTIONS BY HANOI. HOWEVER, IN
VIEW STRONG GOA AND GNZ RESERVATIONS ABOUT EXTENDING
INVITATION THIS YEAR, WE WOULD PROPOSE EXTENDING INFORMAL
INVITATION TO GVN TO ATTEND ONLY PORTION OF AGENDA
DEVOTED TO EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE TREATY AREA WHICH
SCHEDULED FOR MORNING OF SEPT. 28; THIS IS PART OF
MEETING WHERE VIET-NAM HAS TRADITIONALLY MADE ITS
CONTRIBUTION IN PAST YEARS. SINCE THIS YEAR NO PREPARED
SPEECHES BEING MADE DURING THIS AGENDA ITEM EXCEPT BY
HOST GOVERNMENT, GVN PARTICIPATION WOULD BE MORE
STRICTLY AS AN OBSERVER. WE WOULD NOT INVITE GVN TO
ATTEND AFTERNOON SESSION DEVOTED TO REVIEW OF ORGANIZA-
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PAGE 03 STATE 177178

TION AND REDIRECTION OF ITS ACTIVITIES BECAUSE SUCH A
REVIEW LOGICALLY FOR MEMBERS OF SEATO ONLY.

3. PLEASE REPORT THEIR REACTION SOONEST. RUSH

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